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~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

5 March 1980

Admiral,

It has been some time since CIA has had an authentic hero who would be recognized as such by virtually the entire country if his activities were to become known. I believe Tony Mendez falls into this category because of the creativity he demonstrated in establishing the Studio Six cover and the personal courage he showed in going to Iran to bring out the Canadian Six. Tony is a perfect example of a young, highly effective intelligence professional who renders continuing fine service to the country. As you noted to Tony when you met with him, you cannot publicize his exploits which undoubtedly would make him a national figure.

There are at least two ways, however, that you could recognize Tony's contribution and his courage and that would undoubtedly become known at least to his colleagues who could share in his recognition. One way would be for you to take two minutes at the beginning of your Presidential briefing next week just to bring Tony in and introduce him to the President as the CIA man who brought the Canadian Six out of Teheran at considerable personal risk. There need not even be a photograph and we could arrange to have Tony brought into the White House just as an analyst participating in your meeting, or even without that much affiliation with the Agency. The second way to recognize Tony would be the award of a medal in recognition of this particular effort.

On balance, I would recommend taking him in to meet the President. As I mentioned at the outset of this note, it has been a long time since there has been an authentic intelligence hero, ~~someone like~~ who the President would recognize as such. I think the President would be extremely pleased to greet Tony, in part because it's the only American success so far to come out of the entire hostage business.

Great — Meet Pres now
Medal when hostages out RS
& risk / publicity less

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